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Mr. Checkley's

ELECTION-SERMON,

MAY 28th 1755.

Mr. Cheek's

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MAY 28 1753

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—A Day of Darknefs.—

A
S E R M O N

Preach'd before His EXCELLENCY

WILLIAM SHIRLEY, Esq;

The HONORABLE

His MAJESTY's **COUNCIL,**

AND
House of **REPRESENTATIVES,**

Of the Province of the

MASSACHUSETTS - BAY,

NEW - ENGLAND.

May 28th. 1755.

Being the Anniverfary for the Election of His
MAJESTY's COUNCIL: for fald Province.

By **SAMUEL CHECKLEY, A.M.**

Paffor of the New-South Church in Boston.

B O S T O N : N . E .

Printed by *John Draper*, Printer to His Excellency the
GOVERNOR and the Honorable His Majesty's COUNCIL.

MDCCCLV.

In Council, May 30. 1755.

Voted,



THAT *Benjamin Lynde and Joseph
Pyncheon, Esq^{rs}.* be a Committee to
wait on the Reverend Mr. *Samuel
Checkley*, to return him the Thanks of this
Board for his Sermon preached on the An-
niversary Day of Election ; and to desire a
Copy thereof for the Press.

Copy examin'd,

per J. WILLARD, Secty.



An ELECTION-SERMON.

ZEPHANIAH I. 15,

-----*A Day of Darkneſs.*-----

******EPHANIAH* was ſent to God's
++*+*+*+* people in the days of *Jofiah* king
+ *Z* *+* of *Judah*, whoſe reign was vaſtly
++*+*+*+* different from that of his father
***** *Amon*. Of *Amon* we read, * *That*
he did evil in the ſight of the Lord,
ſerved idols, and forſook the God of his fathers : But
when *Jofiah* his ſon came to the Throne, in-
ſtead of treading in his father's ſteps, he ſoon
ſet about a work of reformation among the peo-
ple, and was greatly ſucceeded in his endeavours
for that end.— But yet after a while, the time
came,

* 2 Kings 21. 20.

came, when this great and good work abated, and the people shamefully return'd to their old sins again—Upon this, God sent his servant the prophet to them, to reprove them for their sins, warn them of the judgments that were coming on them, and to persuade them to repent of their evil deeds, that so God might turn from the fierceness of his anger, and repent of the evil, he had tho't to do unto them.

THE particular judgment they were threatened with was the coming of their BABYLONISH enemies, who should make great havock, and slaughter among them ; which is here call'd the *day of the Lord's sacrifice* † because much blood would then be shed, and the slain of the Lord be multiplied—and lest they should put this evil day far away, the prophet assured them, that *it was near, and hastened greatly.* ‡ And that he might thro'ly awaken them, he speaks of this day of their calamity, which was hastening on them, in all the expressions of dread and terror that can be. He therefore calls it, *the Day of the Lord*, the great day of the Lord, a day of wrath, of trouble, and distress ; a day of wasteness, and desolation ; and in the words I have chosen for my text—*a day of darkness*, i. e. a day of great calamity, and distress, a day when every thing round them should look with a dark and melancholly aspect on them.

Now

† context. verse 8.

‡ verse 14.

Now, as this was the case of God's people then, so it also sometimes is, of a people at this day; and I can't but think, that they whose hearts are wise to discern time and judgment, look upon this to be very much our own case, and think the present day, a day of darkness with us. And if so, then I hope, it will not be tho't, altogether foreign to the business of this day; if, instead of discoursing of the divine original of civil government, and how great a blessing it is to mankind; of the qualifications of civil rulers, and their duty to the people under their government; and also, the duty of a people to those in civil authority over them; (which are subjects that have been so often handled, on this anniversary solemnity) I should come to you with a few meditations, on the words I have pitched upon for my text—a day of darkness.

HERE in discoursing from them, I shall endeavour, by divine help, to consider, and shew these two things.

1. WHEN it may be said to be a day of darkness with a people; or when their case may be dark and melancholly.

2. WHAT is the duty of a people at such a day.

I. WHEN it may be said to be a day of darkness with a people; or when their case may be dark

dark and melancholly. And here it may be said,—it is such a day with them,

1. WHEN it is a day of great apostacy and declension, and many heaven-provoking sins are to be seen in the midst of them.—So contrary both to the law and nature of God is sin, that he can't but be provok'd with it, and it is peculiarly offensive to him in his own covenant-people; nor will he let it go unpunish'd in them. *You only have I known of all the families of the earth, therefore will I punish you, for all your iniquities. * Shall I not visit for these things saith the Lord? shall not my soul be avenged on such a nation, as this? †*

ISRAEL were a peculiar people to him, and a people for whom he had done more, than for any other nation under heaven; but they became very sinful and apostate: and therefore he bro't that charge against them, *§ I have nourish'd, and brought up children, but they have rebelled against me; the ox knoweth his owner, and the ass his master's crib, but my people doth not know, Israel doth not consider; and the lamentation made over them; Ah sinful nation, a people laden with iniquity, &c.* And the heaven and earth were called to witness against them, and to stand amaz'd at their ingratitude and rebellion, — *Be astonished, O ye heavens at this, and be horribly afraid; I be*

* Amos 3. 2. † Jer. 5. 29. § Isa. 1. 2, 3, 4.

ye very desolate, saith the Lord; for my people have committed two evils, they have forsaken me, the fountain of living waters, and hewed them out cisterns, broken cisterns that can hold no water. †

AND as that was the case of God's antient people, so it may be the case of a people at this day; and when it is so, they are in a very sad and melancholly one; for what can have a darker aspect on them, than the abounding of drunkenness, prophaneness, uncleanness, covetousness, injustice, extortion, oppression, &c? verily, when this is their case, they may well tremble for fear of God, and be afraid of his judgments—These and such like sins, may turn the smiles of providence into frowns, and pull down the judgments of heaven on them, and heretofore, God may be provoked to make them desolate, a land not inhabited.

Again,

2. SUCH a day it is also with a people, when religion, pure and undefiled religion, which was once their glory, is apace languishing and dying among them—Religion is an honour both to particular persons, and also to a people; it is so to persons of all orders and ages, high and low, rich and poor, old and young, yea, to kings and princes, rulers, and judges of the earth.—The

B emperor

† Jer. 2. 12, 13.

emperor *Theodosius* therefore once said, *he accounted is a greater honour and joy to him, that he was a member of a church, than emperor of the world.* The flourishing of religion, will exalt a people, but the decay of it, be a reproach to them—If it be ask'd—when is religion evidently decaying among a people? I answer, it is so, when the professors of it have lost that zeal (I don't mean a blind enthusiastick zeal, but a true christian zeal, and a zeal according to knowledge) which once they had; and are become indifferent in religion—when, like the church of *Laodiced*, they are lukewarm, and neither cold, nor hot—and when like the church of *Ephesus*, they have lost their first love—when the day of the Lord, which once was sanctified, is shamefully broken, and due care not to put a stop thereto, by those whose proper business it is to do it—when the worship, and ordinances of God's house are neglected, and the duties of religion become tiresome to them—when the faithful messengers of God, and his messages by them are slighted, so that they have reason to complain, *who hath believed our report, and to whom has the arm of the Lord been revealed?* Verily, I have laboured in vain, &c.—when the support of the gospel, and the faithful ministers of Christ, is looked upon as a burthen too heavy for them to bear, and what they do towards it not chearfully, but grudgingly—when family religion, government, and instruction are greatly wanting, and they who should

should support them, become lovers of pleasure, and of the world, more than of God, and religion: when this, I say, is the case of a people, religion is plainly upon the decline, and it is a dark day with them, for what can they expect, unless they remember from whence they are fallen, and repent, and do their first works, but that God come unto them quickly, and remove their candlestick out of it's place, take away his gospel from them, turn their teachers into corners, and send that dreadful famine among them, not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water, but a famine of hearing the word of the Lord— Again,

gdly. SUCH a day is it with a people, when for their sins, God threatens, or visits them with those sore judgments, the famine, pestilence and sword.—It is so, when God calls for a dearth, by reason of which, they are threatened with scarcity of bread. Rain from heaven, and fruitful seasons, are great smiles of providence; and when God gives both the former, and the latter rain in their season, blessing the springing of the year, and also crowning it with his great goodness; so that there is grass for the cattle, and herb for the service of man, a tribute of praise is due to him therefor—Now that God who is the father of the rain, and who begetteth the drops of the dew, who sometimes visits the earth, and waters it with the river of God,

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which

which is full of water, can, when he pleaseth, stop the bottles of heaven, upon which, instead of cooling and refreshing showers, constant scorching heats, and scarcity follow.—This judgment God threatned his people with; *I will consume them by famine.** This judgment he also brought upon them, telling them, at the same time, why he sent it, *viz.* Because they built their own houses in a costly manner, and let his house lie waste, *Ye looked for much, and lo it came to little, and when ye brought it home, I did blow upon it: why? saith the Lord of hosts: Because of mine house that is waste, and ye run every man unto his own house. Therefore the heaven over you is stayed from dew, and the earth is stayed from her fruit. And I called for a drought upon the Land, and upon the mountains, and upon the corn, and upon the new wine, and upon the oyl, &c. †*

AND when this is the case of a people, what a distressing time is it!—when the heaven over their head is brass, and the earth under them is iron, and the rain of their land powder and dust—when the vine is dried up, the apple tree, and all the trees of the field are withered. When the land mourneth, because the harvest of the field is perished—when the beasts groan, and the herds of cattle are perplexed, because they have no pasture, and the flocks of sheep are made desolate—when the fire devoureth the pastures of the wilderness, and the

* Jer. 14. 12.

† Hag. 1. 9, 10, 11.

the flame burneth up the trees of the wood, and the beasts of the field cry, because the rivers of waters are dried up.—See the distress of such a season spoken of by the prophet,—*Judah mourneth, and the gates thereof languish, they are black to the ground, and the cry of Jerusalem is gone up: because the ground is chapt, for there was no rain in the earth, the plow-men were ashamed, they covered their heads. Yea, the hind also calved in the field and forsook it, because there was no grass.* *

AGAIN, such a day it is also, when God sends contagious and mortal sickness among them. This is another of those judgments God threatned his people with, in case of disobedience. *The Lord will make thy plagues wonderful, and the plagues of thy seed, even great plagues, and of long continuance; and sore sickness, and of long continuance.* † And by this judgment did he again and again distress and waste them. Agreeable hereto we read, how at one time he sent the pestilence among them, of which there soon died fourteen thousand and seven hundred; at another time he sent it and there died thereof twenty and four thousand, and at another time, no less than seventy thousand. §

WHAT a dark day, when God sends among a people the pestilence that walketh in darkness, and the destruction that wasteth at noon-day: when

*Jer. 14. beg. †Deut. 28. 59. §Numb. 16, & 25 ch. 2 Sam. 24. 15.

when they are afraid, for the terror by night, and the arrow that flieth by day : when sickness enters the city, and the destroying angel stands with his sword drawn over it : when the distemper soon spreads, and death rides in triumph in the streets, sparing neither rich nor poor, old nor young, and many, in a short time, are carried to the grave, that house appointed for all living ; and that cry is heard, *death is come up into our windows, to cut off our young men from without, and our children from the streets.* *

AGAIN, such a day also it is when the people are call'd to hear the sound of the trumpet and the alarm of war.

PEACE on honorable terms, when every one can sit quietly under his own vine and fig-tree, and there be none to make them afraid, is a great favour of heaven ; and the time will come, when the bow shall be broken, the chariot burnt in the fire, and wars cease from one end of the earth to the other. The time, when they shall beat their swords into plow-shares, and their spears into pruning-hooks : nation shall not lift up the sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more ; and then instead of wars and fightings which proceed from the lusts of men, the wolf shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard lie down with the kid, the calf, the young lion,

lyon, and the fatling together, and a little child shall lead them; the cow also and the bear shall feed, their young ones shall lie down together, and the lyon shall eat straw like the ox; the sucking child shall play on the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put his hand on the cockatrice den.—But that happy state of the church is yet to come; and the corruptions of men, will still be so predominant, that war will sometimes be inevitable.

THERE are those, I am sensible, who doubt the lawfulness of christians making war on any occasion; but to me it seems plain there can be no just ground therefor either from reason or revelation: for when the soldiers came to *John* the baptist, the fore-runner of Christ, with that enquiry, *what shall we do?* § he didn't order them to lay down their arms, telling them there would be no need of men of a military character, and martial spirit under the gospel; but taught them how to behave in the station they were in: *do violence to no man, neither accuse any falsely, and be content with your wages.*

NOT that christians should delight in war, shedding blood, preying upon, and destroying one another; no, by no means, for this don't become reasonable creatures, much less christians—but yet, a martial spirit is a noble spirit, and soldiers, expert in war, of good conduct,
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and undaunted courage, are an honor to their country, and the safety of a people, under God, depends not a little on them ; and to take up arms both offensively and defensively, is sometimes absolutely necessary. The insults, inroads and encroachments of their ambitious and perfidious enemies upon them, the preservation of their religion, rights, and properties, yea, their lives, and the lives of theirs, call aloud hereto ; and then their state is melancholly.—Thus it is, when great preparations for war are making both by sea and land, fleets man'd and ready for action, land-forces also rais'd, well-arm'd, well-disciplined, and prepared to march.

Thus it is also, when war is publicly proclaimed, and that cry heard ; prepare war, wake up the mighty men, let all the men of war draw near, let them come up--- beat your plow-shares into swords, and your pruning hooks into spears, let the weak say, I am strong ; order the buckler and shield, and draw near to battle ; harness the horses, mount ye horsemen, and stand forth with your helmets, furnish the spears, put on the brigandines.---The sword ! O how much human blood has been spilt by it ! yea, what a field of blood has it often made of whole kingdoms and countries ! every battle of the warrior, being with confused noise, and garments roll'd in blood : What a dark day then

when it is drawn !---Such a day it is, when God suffers enemies to distress them, by making inroads upon their exposed borders, destroying not only their substance but the lives of some and carrying others into a doleful captivity---when enemies invade and make such bold attempts against them, as oblige them, in their own defence, to march forth, and speak with them in the gate---or when they themselves are forming hazardous enterprizes, and important expeditions against their enemies, by which means great numbers of their brethren are call'd to jeopard their lives in the high places of the field.---But, how much darker the day still ! If the Lord of hosts and God of armies, and whose is the victory, instead of being on their side, and fighting their battles for them, should fight against them, making them either to flee before their enemies, fall by their sword, or be led captive by them.

I SPEAK not thus, to damp in the least measure, the courage of those brave soldiers, who are gone or going forth in the service of their king and country : No, God forbid, for were they all here before God this day, I would heartily encourage them, as *Hezekiah* did the People, when invaded by *Sennacherib*, *Be strong and courageous, be not afraid, nor dismayed for the king of Assyria, nor for all the multitude that is with him, for there is more with us, than with him ; with him is an arm of flesh, but with us is the Lord*

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*our God, to help us and fight our battles. * And as that brave general Joab did, his men, both officers and soldiers, just before the battle began: Be of good courage, and play the man, for your people, and for the cities of your God. †*

I proceed to say in the next place,

4^{thly}. It is a day of darkness, &c. when a truly generous publick-spirit is much wanting, and a narrow, covetous and selfish one prevails.

No man was born for himself; nor should any one seek his own, but every one another's wealth. A publick-spirit is a noble and truly christian spirit, but a narrow and contracted one is mean and sordid; and they who are of such a spirit, are often very far from being the persons they feign themselves to be; they may speak fair, pretend a generous love to mankind, and concern for the common welfare of the places where they live; but SELF is at the bottom, and they will not be likely to lay out themselves to serve the publick, unless they can serve themselves at the same time. --- This spirit, instead of inclining them to feed the hungry, and cloath the naked, will rather dispose them to vex, grieve and grind the face of the poor; and do such mean and ungenerous actions, as they ought to abhor and be ashamed of; and what may

* 2 Chron. 32. 27. † 2 Sam. 10. 12.

may not persons of this spirit be often bribed to do?

BUT on the other hand, persons of a generous and publick spirit, will be useful and serviceable both in church and state, and blessings to the places where they live.--They will desire, and endeavour to do good to all, as they have opportunity, and contrive how others may be the better for them--like the liberal man, they will devise liberal things, and by liberal things shall they stand.---

ARE they in civil authority, they will endeavour to be just, ruling in the fear of God; and by no means will they be perswaded to betray their trust. They will sincerely endeavour to know the duty of the station they are in, and as sincerely endeavour faithfully to perform it.

WE read of Mordecai, that he was next to the king, great among the Jews, and accepted of the multitude of his brethren, seeking the wealth of his people and speaking peace to all his seed.* He was good (says one) as well as great, and his greatness gave him an opportunity of doing the more good---He did not seek his own wealth, and how to make an estate for himself and family, which is the chief thing many aim at, when they get into great places at court; but consulted

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* *Ester* 10. 3.

ted the welfare of his people, and made it his business to advance the same: He improved his power, wealth, and interest with the *King* and *Queen*, for the publick good, did not side with one party against another, but endeavour'd to be a common father to all; and heretofore was he universally accepted and esteemed—And persons of a public spirit (as *Mordecai* was) will endeavour to do as he did, and be accepted of the multitude of their brethren as he was—But when persons of his character are few and persons of a contrary one are numerous, a people are in dark and melancholy case.

5^{thly}. IT is a dark day with a people, when, instead of peace, love and harmony; strife and contention prevail.

GOD is the God of love and peace, and where these are, he will dwell; but the want of them will provoke him to depart.—*Behold how good and pleasant it is for Brethren to dwell together in unity.* * How good and pleasant this, in particular families, societies, churches, and in a common-wealth! When this is their case, things are like to go well with them: This will be both for their honour, profit and strength.

BUT on the contrary, strife and contention are of pernicious consequence—*The beginning of*
strife

2 *Psalms* 133. 1.

strife (says Solomon) *is as when one letteth out water, therefore leave off contention before it is medled with.* And the apostle says, *where envying and strife is, there is confusion, and every evil work. If ye bite and devour one another, take heed that ye be not consumed one of another.* †

WE read of God's people, *that their heart was divided.* ‡ And it was spoken of, as matter of lamentation, *that there were that raised up strife and contention*; § and when this is the case of a people, and there are many that sow discord, foment divisions, and incense men one against another, it is matter of grief, as *a house, so a kingdom or province divided against itself cannot stand*—The natural consequence of contention, in all societies, is common ruin: and when a people keep clashing one against another, will they not be in danger of breaking to pieces, and when they are divided one against another, will they not become an easy prey to a common enemy? and if they continue to bite and devour one another, what can be expected, but that they be consumed one of another?

6thly. SUCH a day is it with a people, when their public affairs labour under peculiar difficulties and perplexities, and those who have the conduct of them, notwithstanding all their wisdom, are at a loss what to do and to find out means to extricate and deliver them.

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† Prov. 17. 14. Jam. 3. 16. Gal. 5. 15. ‡ Hos. 10. 2. § Hab. 1. 3.

As a skilful pilot at helm is necessary, when a vessel is in a storm, and she may suffer shipwreck for want thereof; so it is absolutely necessary, that men of wisdom and sagacity, should have the conduct of the public affairs of a people, when they labour under perplexing difficulties; and for want of such, a common-wealth may be ruined. Now, it may be the case of a people not to have these at the head of affairs, at such a time; or if they have, yet they may be greatly in the dark what to do; and want that spirit of council, and understanding which once they had.

GOD said of his sinful people, *The wisdom of their wise men shall perish, and the understanding of their prudent men shall be hid.* * And Job, speaking of God, says, *he leadeth the counsellors away spoiled, and maketh the judges fools.* † ---- When this is the case of a people it is a dark one indeed.

7^{thly}. SUCH a day is it with a people, when trade and business, which once flourish'd among them, and by which they increas'd in wealth at home, and in credit and reputation abroad, fail and are gone.

TRADE and merchandize, well understood, regulated and properly carried on, are doubtless great blessings to mankind.

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* Isai. 29. 14. † Chap. 12. ver. 17.

THE husbandman, the tradesman, the labourer, and the public too, may be served hereby : Therefore as it is the wisdom of a people, to encourage arts and industry, so also is it, to promote trade and business, in such places as are most commodiously situated therefor : And the wealth and reputation of a people have been greatly increas'd, by the trade they have carried on, and correspondence they have held, with different and distant parts of the world.—What, but the merchandize of *Tyre*, made her so great, so much admired, and cry'd up by the many nations she had dealings with.----When therefore trade and business of almost every sort fail, inso much that many, who once could comfortably provide for themselves and families, and at the same time, render unto *Cæsar* the things that are *Cæsar's*, and to God the things that are God's, are so reduced, that they are hard put to it to get their daily bread, and unable to pay their dues, either to church, or state, not thro' idleness, or extravagance, but purely for want of employment, it must needs be a dark day with them.

8thly, and lastly. SUCH a day also is it with them, when they remain unhumbled and incorrigible, notwithstanding all the humbling providences they have been under.

THIS was the case of God's ancient people, and therefore it was said of them, *they are not humbled*

humbled to this day—thou hast stricken them, but they have not grieved, thou hast consumed them, but they have refused to receive correction, they have made their faces harder than a rock, they have refused to return. ‡

THUS I have endeavoured briefly to shew, When it may be said to be a day of darkness with a people ; and now proceed as I propos'd,

II. To shew, what is their duty, when it is such a day with them.

And here I shall only briefly say,

THEY should be suitably affected therewith, and lay it to heart. They should not think all is well, and cry peace, peace to themselves, which would make their case not better, but worse, and give just occasion for that complaint to be made of them, *they are sottish children, they have no understanding. Lord, when thy hand is lifted up, they will not see. §*

THEY should also, justify God, and condemn themselves. How melancholly soever their case is, they can lay no blame upon God, who can never be charged with any injustice ; is holy in all his ways, and righteous in all his works ; is judge of all the earth, and cannot but do right.

That

‡ Jer. 44. 10. Chap. 3. § Jer. 4. 22. Ksa. 26. 11.

That acknowledgment becomes them ; O Lord, righteousness belongeth unto thee, but unto us, confusion of faces, as at this day. *

THEY should also seriously consider and reflect upon their past ways—*Thus saith the Lord of hosts (to them at such a time) consider your ways ; and unless they do so, he may complain of them and say ; I hearkened and heard, but they spake not aright, no man repented him of his wickedness, saying, what have I done ! †*

THEY should also make humble and penitent confession to God, and earnestly implore pardon, relief, and help—that language becomes them ; *We have sinned, and committed iniquity, and have done wickedly, and have rebelled, even by departing from thy precepts and thy judgments. ‡ O remember not against us former iniquities, let thy tender mercies speedily prevent us, for we are brought very low—help us, O God of our salvation, for the glory of thy name : and deliver us ; and purge away our sins for thy name sake. §*

Finally,

THEY should set about a speedy and thoro' reformation.

I proceed now to the application. And here it may be said,

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• Dan. 9. 7. † Jer. 3. 6. ‡ Dan. 9, 5. § Psal. 79. 8. 9.

Is it not obvious from what we have heard, that in divers respects it is a day of darkness *with this Province* at this day—It is so if we consider the growth of sin—the decay of religion amongst us—how we have been brought low, by one judgment after another, and that God's anger is not, to this day, turned away, but his hand is stretched out still.

Furthermore, may we not from what has been said learn, what is our indispensable duty at this day—That we should lay to heart our melancholly case, be humble under the hand of God—implore his mercy—and return to him who hath torn, and who can heal us, who hath smitten, and who can bind us up.

MAY I not add ? that from what we have heard we may learn, the need we have of men of wisdom and knowledge, prudence, integrity, &c. to be at the Head, and have the management of our publick affairs at this Day. But

I SHALL close my discourse with a brief address—to our civil Rulers—and to the whole body of this people.

1. To our civil Rulers ; who we hope, will act the part of Fathers to us at such a dark day as the present one is.

AND

AND may I be allowed in the first place to address myself to *You, Sir*, who have the honor to sit in the first chair of government—

May it please your EXCELLENCY,

WE can't but esteem you a Gentleman of superior powers and talents, to be One formed for government, and therefore the better qualified for the honor which God and the king have put upon you, and to fill the chair you are in—

And,

SINCE the reins of government are in your hands, at such a dark day as the present one is, and at so critical a conjuncture—what can you desire better, *Sir*, for yourself, or this people for you, than the divine presence with you, to support, and encourage you under the weight of the public cares; and that he who is the father of lights, who is wisdom, and in whom is no darkness at all, would give unto you that wisdom, which shall be profitable to direct, at such a day as this is; and would enable you, thro' the whole of your administration, so to conduct yourself, as to make this people easy, and happy under it,—so also as to approve yourself to him, who is King of kings, and Lord of lords, who standeth in the congregation of the mighty, and who judgeth among the gods, to your royal master also, one of the best of kings, to your own con-

science, to the people under your government, and to Christ the judge of all, to whom you, Sir, as well as we, must one day give an account.

YOUR Excellency can't but be well acquainted with the state, and circumstances of this province ; the better able therefore to judge, what will serve the best interests of it ; and our earnest desire is, that you would exert yourself to the uttermost, to promote and advance the same.

A PROVINCE, that look upon themselves more happy, under the British constitution—a province, more loyal to his majesty KING GEORGE, and more firmly attached to the illustrious house of HANOVER, I may venture to say, is not in all the KING's dominions: we therefore hope, that while on the one hand, you maintain his Majesty's prerogative, you will on the other, be tender of the liberties of this people ; and also use your best interest, in the court of *Great-Britain*, that we may still enjoy the favour, both of the KING, and his ministers.

ONE thing which will greatly add to the weight of government on you, is, that according to the present aspect of providence, and from the great military preparations, that have been made, and are still making in *Great-Britain*, *France* and NORTH-AMERICA, we may expect soon to hear the sound of the trumpet, and the alarm.

alarm to war; and if we should, what part of his majesty's dominions, more like to be the seat of it, than these *Northern-Colonies*?

Is not *North-America* what *France* has long envied us, and has been and still is making very bold attempts (which God of his infinite mercy prevent) to become masters of?—Since therefore the conduct of the affairs of a war, and particularly, of one important undertaking, is devolved upon you, and you are call'd (as we hear) to go forth in person and head the forces under your command—our hearty wish, and earnest prayer for you, is, that the Lord, who is a man of war, would *teach your hands to war, and your fingers to fight*, (and would do the same to officers and soldiers under you, that so they may play the man for their people, and for the cities of our God) would carry you thro' the many fatigues, and difficulties you may meet with, and preserve you in every danger, succeed you in the hazardous enterprize before you, and enable you, so to conduct the same, as to come off with honor, and applause, and approve yourself a good soldier, as well as a wise governor:— And,

SUFFER me, *Sir*, to add, without offence, We hope you will think it worthy your care, that our brethren, who shall so freely venture their lives, in the service of their *king* and *country*, have no just cause to complain of wrong and injury

injury done them ; but receive a due recompence of reward——Thus to act your part, will endear you, *Sir*, to this people, gain you love and honor from them, afford you inward peace, and calmness of mind, whenever providence shall call you to resign the chair, and quit the present stage of action, and what is greater than all, will give you boldness in the day of the Lord Jesus.——

I SHALL in the next place address myself to the gentlemen, who are immediately concern'd in the elections of this day : HIS MAJESTY'S HONORABLE COUNCIL, AND HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,

Gentlemen,

THE charter privileges, which, under God and the king, we yet enjoy, are great and invaluable ; priviledges, handed down to us from our fathers, and which (pray God) may be handed down from us to our children after us, even to the latest posterity.

THE election of persons, to sit at the council board, and assist, and advise the king's governor, is with you ; and if the most suitable persons, for that end, are not elected, where must the blame lie ?—Since therefore this is the particular business of this day, I would in the first place

place remind you, that the time is coming, when you will be called to an account for the transactions of this day ; and the views and designs, with which you shall act, be enquired into—And that therefore it highly concerns you, seriously to consider, whether your proceedings are such, as you can answer to your own consciences, and to this people now, and to Christ in the great day.—And then suffer me, in the name and fear of God, to beseech you, to *have your eyes upon the faithful in the land* ; choose men, who, you have reason to think, fear God, honor the king, are true friends to the province, and will stand up for the privileges of it, religious as well as civil.

DON'T let any have your votes, because they are of this or that party, or will be most likely to serve this or that particular interest, or to carry on this or that particular scheme—but such as you think in conscience, are best qualified for a seat at that HONORABLE BOARD, and most likely to serve the public.

WHEN was there greater need of men of sense, and wisdom, judgment and prudence, foresight and insight, than at this day ? therefore elect *such as are understanding in the times*, and are most likely to know what Israel ought to do. Men, of integrity and honesty, steadiness and resolution, not given to change, and that will

not suffer themselves to be made Tools ; men, not of a narrow & selfish, but public spirit, & that will be most likely to advance, not their own private interest, but the welfare of the province : men, not only of wisdom, and so most capable of advising in every important affair ; but of courage and boldness, and who will not be afraid to speak their minds, and give their advice freely, when called thereto : men of religion, and promoters of it, lovers of learning, and friends to the *College*, that society, which our fore-fathers so early founded, and where many of the sons of *New-England* have been educated, who have been eminently useful, both in church and state.

AND when the elections of this day shall be over, and ye proceed to public business, let your first concern be, faithfully to discharge the duty of the station ye are in.

YE will doubtless have laid before you, affairs of great importance, and that will require the whole of your time ; avoid therefore running into parties, and entering into such debates, as will be likely to issue, only in a mispence of time, and encrease of charge to the province.

ENDEAVOUR after unanimity and dispatch, but do nothing rashly.

THE power put into your hands, by the charter

charter, and laws of the province, is not small ; use it well, and beware of abusing it and exceeding the limits of it. In all you do, act uprightly, conscientiously, impartially ; and when in difficult and perplexing cases, you are at a loss what to do, remember those words of the apostle ; *if any of you lack wisdom, let him ask it of God.* * In all your ways acknowledge him, and may he direct your paths for you.

I SHALL now briefly address the whole body of this people, and so finish.

AND is it as we have heard, let me then in the name and fear of God, exhort you to a speedy and general reformation. Reformation is what has been often press'd upon you, and, if I mistake not, from this desk, on this anniversary solemnity ; but how little is there to be seen of it ! may not God complain of this people, after all his dealings with us, as he did of the Jewish nation, *they have made their faces harder than a rock, they have refused to return.*

Is a reformation too late now, and is there no hope or possibility of it ? God forbid ; for his sake then, your own sakes, and the sake of yours and your posterity, let every one set about it in earnest. May our civil rulers, not only of a higher but lower order, all cloathed with any authority, put their hand to it :—*Arise, for this matter be-*

E

longeth

* James 1. 5.

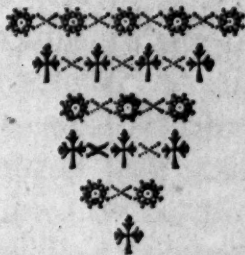
longeth unto you, be of good courage then, and do it. This is also, what the Lord's ministers are indispensibly obliged to, let not any of us then be wanting in doing our part toward it. But it is to be feared, this work will not be effected, unless heads of families also engage in it : A family-reformation would soon bring on a general one.

'TILL this is the case with us, we may look for light, but behold darkness ; for peace, but no good will come ; and justly expect to be punish'd yet seven times for our iniquities. But should we at length become a penitent and reformed people ; we might then hope, that light would arise to us under all our darkness, and that we should see joy and gladness, according to the days wherein we have seen evil, and the years wherein we have been afflicted ; that we should have the divine presence with, and blessing on us, in all important affairs, both of a civil, religious and military nature, that God, even our own God, would bless us, glory yet dwell in our land, and we be that happy people, whose God is the Lord, and it be said of us, as it was of Israel, *There is none like unto the God of Jeshurun, who rideth upon the Heaven in thine help, and his excellency upon the sky. The eternal God is thy fuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms . . . he shall thrust out the enemy from before thee, and shall say, destroy them.---Happy art thou, O Israel : Who is like unto thee, O people saved by the lord, the shield of*

*of thine help, and who is the sword of thine excellency! And thine enemies shall be found liars unto thee, and thou shalt tread upon their high places.**

AMEN & AMEN.

• Deut. 33. 26, 27, 29.



of thine help, and who is the Lord of thine excellen-
cy! And thine enemies shall be found thine unto thee,
and thou shalt tread upon their high places.*

AMEN. **46** AT AMEN.

• Dom. 22. 23. 24. 25.

